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The Leaning Object: April 2008

John C. Owens

NU Vice President and Harlan Vice Chancellor, IANR

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Perspectives

Recently Coy F. Cross II, author of the book, *Justin Smith Morrill, Father of the Land-Grant Colleges*, was on campus to speak to our Justin Smith Morrill Scholars in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources.



John C. Owens
NU Vice President and
Harlan Vice Chancellor, IANR

Sponsored by Professor Ed Harvey, these undergraduates, intellectually curious and interested in advancing the public good through civic responsibility and leadership, have a number of learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom.

Hearing Dr. Cross speak certainly was one of them. I had that pleasure myself, and the added pleasure of taking part in the question and answer period that followed his remarks.

Seeing our students' interest in the subject, listening to their thoughtful inquiries, confirmed again what I so often say when I am speaking for the Institute — we have a grand group of students studying with us.

Their enthusiasm, their knowledge and insights make me look forward with anticipation to their leadership in our world as they advance in their lives and careers.

I also had the opportunity to discuss Justin Smith Morrill, along with Abraham Lincoln, when I recently received the Carl Albin and Alvi Spader Distinguished Leadership Award from the Nebraska LEAD Program.

The leadership of Morrill and Lincoln, the vision they forged for our country in the worst of times, always will amaze me, although I have been studying both now for a number of years.

Certainly it would have been easy for both, in the midst of the Civil War, to focus so totally on the historic and horrible events around them that their concerns for the present eclipsed vision for the future.

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The Morrill Act of 1862
established a Land Grant University
in each state where
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would be instruction
in agriculture and related fields.



April 2008

Newly-opened center allows for closer examination of quilts

The new University of Nebraska–Lincoln International Quilt Study Center and Museum lets people see quilts in two different ways.

First, museum visitors can see quilts as they are displayed in the gallery. Second, quilts can be viewed in the virtual gallery, where large video projection screens and LCD monitors display the intricate stitching and other aspects of the quilts that cannot be seen with the naked eye, said Patricia Crews, center director.

Since the new quilt museum opened on East Campus with much fanfare at 33rd and Holdrege streets on March 30, the facility has had a steady stream of visitors interested in seeing the quilts. The public opening drew about 1,500 people, most of whom waited in line for an hour or more to get in and some of whom came from other countries.

"The turnout was amazing. We were thrilled," Crews said.

The \$12 million, 37,000 square-foot center was built following a \$5 million gift from Robert and Ardis James, who previously donated more than 1,000 quilts to UNL.

That donation resulted in a total collection of more than 2,300 quilts, which is the world's largest collection of quilts held in public trust.

The quilts formerly were stored in the Home Economics Building, which lacked



Visitors view quilts at the International Quilt Study Center.

the space necessary to adequately display and research the quilt collection, Crews said. The new building has a larger storage area as well as a conservation work room with four large tables where the quilts can be examined technically and stylistically by curators, faculty, students, and visiting scholars.

"This has definitely expanded our research effort," said Crews, adding that the center will enhance UNL's research mission.

The quilts, which represent 24 countries and some of which date back to the early 1700s, "are an extraordinary resource for advancing our understanding of the past," she said.

Scholars from around the world will visit and use the center's resource and spread the word that UNL is an unequalled research center in the world for quilt history, she said.

"The collections offer opportunities continued on page 2

Yet these two men — born slightly more than a year apart, from different parts of our nation, one handsome, the other known to say, “If I were two-faced, would I be wearing this one?” — truly changed our country.

One left school at 15. The other had no more than a year of formal schooling. Self-educated men, together they forged a legacy of land-grant universities that made higher education available to the common man and woman, where before it was the privilege of the elite.

Both men realized higher education’s importance in moving the country forward from the damage of the Civil War, into the future. The Morrill Act reflects their democratic belief that everyone should have free opportunity for as complete an educa-

tion as that person’s talents, abilities, and drive warrant, without restrictions of class, fortune, sex, or geography.

They understood education’s importance in building an informed and industrious population.

While Justin Smith Morrill’s speeches always were carefully written and his arguments well supported, he did not have the eloquence of speech that belonged to Abraham Lincoln. In looking through some of Lincoln’s writings recently, I came upon several quotes I shared with the LEAD group, including two I’ll end with here, for all of us at work for Nebraska.

The first:

“I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but

I am bound to live by the light that I have. I must stand with anybody that stands right, and stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong.”

The second:

“I do the very best I know how — the very best I can; and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right, what’s said against me won’t amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference.”

Words from our nation’s past, so applicable to our work for Nebraska’s future.



Newly-opened center allows for closer examination of quilts

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to the academic community for research using culturally significant textile documents that can be found nowhere else,” Crews said.

The center will have two exhibitions through August. One is a solo show by renowned quilt artist Nancy Crow of Ohio. The other, called Quilts in Common, features a selection of “masterpieces from our collection,” Crews said.

The center’s virtual gallery has several computer work stations where visitors can search for and examine specific quilts. A

large projection screen enables quilts to be displayed in their full size. By touching the screen, visitors can zoom in on the quilts and examine particular detail, Crews said.

UNL’s Department of Textiles, Clothing & Design in the College of Education and Human Sciences is the academic home for the quilt center, which has a classroom that will be used for textiles studies.

“This entire building is a classroom. This entire building is a laboratory,” Crews said.

— Lori McGinnis

McVey named director of Vet Center

Scott McVey is the new director of the Veterinary Diagnostic Center at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

McVey first joined the Department of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences in 2006, serving as the section head for bacteriology in the diagnostic center. He formerly was on the faculty at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Kansas State University, joined the production group at Rhone Merieux, and was director of analytical development and laboratory sciences at Pfizer Animal Health.

“Dr. McVey is committed to quality service and will be a great asset as we strive to enhance the services that we can bring to the veterinary community,” said David Hardin, UNL department head.

McVey succeeds David Steffen.

Lodl named assistant dean of UNL extension

Kathleen Lodl, University of Nebraska–Lincoln extension specialist in 4-H Youth Development, is the new assistant dean of extension.



As an extension faculty member since 1992, Lodl this past year served as an extension administrative intern. She worked with the Family, Youth, and Community Partners, a 35-member team of statewide stakeholders who are responsible for advocating for UNL youth and family programs.

Her new responsibilities will include working with action teams on program planning; evaluation and impact reporting; developing new and strengthening existing partnerships at the local, state, and federal levels; mentoring new staff; and working with extension’s federal reports.

| Kathleen Lodl

Need to meet with the

Vice President/Vice Chancellor?
Drop-ins each Friday from 3-5 p.m.*
John C. Owens

NU Vice President for
Agriculture and Natural Resources
and Harlan Vice Chancellor of IANR

202 Ag Hall • (402) 472-2871

*Occasionally Dr. Owens will be called away on University business.

Editorial - Cheryl Alberts and Lori McGinnis • Layout - Anne Moore

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Ag lending, Navy give Richard Hahn a dual career

Richard C. Hahn of Omaha combined his love for agriculture with a love of serving his country. The result was a dual career in agricultural lending business and the U.S. Navy.

Hahn, a 1961 graduate in agricultural economics from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, is retired from Farmers National Co. and is a retired Navy captain as well.

After graduating from Norfolk High School where he was active in the FFA program, the Battle Creek area native decided to pursue a career in agriculture. He grew up on a farm and had a love of the land.

While studying ag economics, Hahn also decided to take the National Reserve Officer Training Course. After graduation he spent two years of active duty in the Navy, serving in the western Pacific and in Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In 1963 it was time to start his agricultural career.

“In those days someone with a college degree and military experience found the job market wide open,” Hahn said.

Hahn interviewed with three companies and accepted a job with Metropolitan Life Agricultural Investments in Fremont. A year later the company transferred him to Norfolk as a field loan representative — a position he held until 1978.

While concentrating on his career, Hahn hadn’t given up the military. After his two years of active duty ended he entered the Navy Reserves, where he spent 28 years and was promoted to the rank of captain.

As his military career was advancing, his civilian career was advancing as well. In 1978 he was given the opportunity to move to Grand Island for a promotion to assistant manager, and later manager, of the Nebraska branch office of Metropolitan Life.

In 1986 Metropolitan bought Farmers National Co. and

moved Hahn and his family to Omaha to become president and chief executive officer of the newly-acquired company. He served in that position for 19 years until his retirement in 2005.

“I enjoyed my whole career,” he said. “I enjoyed the successes and working with the same company or an affiliate of it my whole career.”

Hahn attributes a “good, sound education” at UNL with helping prepare

him for his career. While in college he was active in Kappa Sigma Fraternity and the Block and Bridle Club.

He continued extracurricular interests beyond college, serving as president of Agriculture Builders of Nebraska and on the state’s Natural Resources Commission under then-Govs. Charles Thone and Bob Kerrey. He also was president of the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts and served on two NRD boards in Norfolk and Grand Island. He serves as a Nebraska delegate to the Council of Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching (CARET). In March he received the 2008 leadership award from the Omaha Agri-Business Club after being nominated by NU Vice President and IANR Harlan Vice Chancellor John Owens.

Though retired, Hahn still has farming interests. He and his brother own farmland in northeast and central Nebraska. He serves on many boards and sells farm and ranch real estate for Farmers National Co.

Hahn and his wife, Pat, have three children and seven grandchildren.

— Lori McGinnis



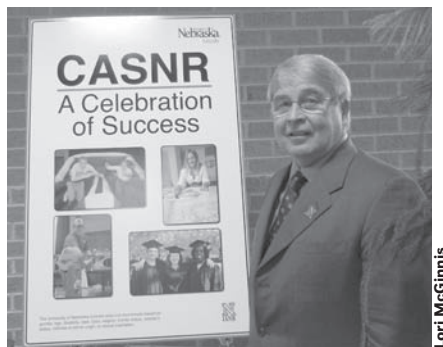
Richard Hahn

Celebration of Success marks CASNR enrollment growth

The Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources sponsored a Celebration of Success to recognize enrollment growth in the University of Nebraska–Lincoln College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources in the fall and spring semesters this academic year.

The college led the university in growth in the percentage and overall enrollment numbers. Individual departments were presented certificates for growth in percentages and numbers.

Look for growth to continue. College Dean Steve Waller said applications are up for the coming fall by 17 percent and enrollment deposits are up 8.1 percent.



CASNR Dean Steve Waller celebrates the college’s enrollment successes.

Lori McGinnis

Follow-up study shows cost of turning switchgrass to ethanol

The process of using switchgrass as a source for biofuel is gaining steam with the release of a new UNL study determining costs average \$60 per ton to produce switchgrass for cellulosic ethanol.

Richard Perrin, a UNL agricultural economist, said this research is the most comprehensive study to date on assessing the economic costs of producing switchgrass biomass in commercial fields.

The joint study by the USDA-Agricultural Research Service and IANR contracted 10 farmers in Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota to grow switchgrass commercially for five years, starting in 2000 and 2001.

The study excludes costs to transport the switchgrass to a biorefinery and processing it.

The study follows up on a study released in January that showed switchgrass grown for biofuel production produces 540 percent more energy than it takes to grow it.

Biofuel also was the topic of a National 25x’25 Renewable Energy Summit held in Omaha in March, where grass, woody materials, and waste were promoted as substances for making fuel.

Attendees at the conference toured the university’s Agricultural Research and Development Center near Mead.

UNL celebrates launch of eXtension

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension leadership has helped pave the way for a national initiative bringing “the best of the best” in unbiased, research-based information to the public.

Currently 16 subject areas have been developed through *eXtension.org*, a partnership of 74 U.S. land-grant colleges and universities.

Elbert Dickey, UNL extension dean, said UNL extension specialists have provided leadership or co-leadership in four of the 16 areas. They are: Kathy Anderson, horses; Rick Rasby, beef cattle; Rick Koelsch, livestock and poultry environmental management; and Scott Hygnstrom, wildlife damage management. In addition, Shirley Niemeyer provided extensive material for extension’s disaster education area. Dan Cotton of Nebraska provides overall leadership as *eXtension* director.

Other current *eXtension* areas of expertise are in cotton, dairy, diversity, entrepreneurship, family caregiving, fire ants, Map@syst, parenting, personal finance, youth SET for life, and gardens, lawns and landscapes.

Among *eXtension.org*’s offerings are more than 36,000 frequently asked questions and appropriate answers, said Koelsch, UNL extension assistant dean. Consumers who have questions after reviewing *eXtension* information have the option to “Ask an Expert” their question.

A national *eXtension* kickoff was held Feb. 21 in Washington, D.C., while UNL extension celebrated Nebraska’s leadership at a March 17 reception.

– Cheryl Alberts



UNL extension hosted a reception celebrating Nebraska leadership for *eXtension*.

Brett Hampton

Author addresses children and nature

UNL Extension and the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum helped bring Richard Louv, author of the book “Last Child in the Woods,” to campus to discuss how to connect children and nature.

Louv, a journalist and child advocacy expert, discussed the divide between children and nature and offered suggestions on how to reconnect youth with the natural world. Satellite sites at UNL extension offices in Hastings, Scottsbluff, York, Harrison, and Fairbury hosted an additional 114 participants.

Kudo Award given to Adams

Stacy Adams, greenhouse manager for the Department of Agronomy and Horticulture, has been given the University of Nebraska Board of Regents Kudo Award.



Stacy Adams

Letters in support of his nomination stated, “Stacy is an expert in greenhouse management and willingly shares his knowledge with his peers and the public.” Another supporter wrote he is “an eager team worker and is always willing to pitch in for the good of the department.”

Four receive OEA Awards

Four IANR employees have been chosen to receive Outstanding Employee Awards.

Kurt Himmelberg, agricultural research technician at the U.S. Meat and Animal Research Center at Clay Center, has been selected to receive the OEA for office/service staff for March. A letter in support of his nomination said he goes “above and beyond the basic needs of the position, always working in the best interest of his employer and the job, using his knowledge and ingenuity, and always leading by example which inspires teamwork attitudes.”



Kurt Himmelberg

John Nollette, agricultural research technician at the Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory near Whitman, has received the OEA for office service staff for April. A nominator wrote “John’s account-



John Nollette

ability, accuracy, and persistence are all characteristics that are invaluable as he works with researchers in data collection.”

Bryan Areman, budget officer for the IANR Finance and Personnel Office, received the OEA for managerial/professional staff for March and April. A nominator wrote “his efficiency, effectiveness, and service ethic are characteristics that have epitomized a sustained level of exceptional productivity.”



Bryan Areman

Denise Zinniel, laboratory manager with the Department of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences, received the OEA for managerial/professional staff for May and June. A nominator wrote “she is skillful at identifying new tasks that are necessary to improve laboratory and departmental operations.”



Denise Zinniel

UAAD award given

Jeff Bassford, manager of the IANR office of Finance and Personnel, has received the Carl A. Donaldson Award for excellence in management.

The award was established in 1972 by the University Association for Administrative Development to promote the purposes of the organization and recognize UNL employees who demonstrate outstanding skills in management.

The award included a \$1,000 stipend.



Jeff Bassford